

discussed LB 1087, arose out of the Nebraskaplex Initiative which this body approved three years ago. The purpose of the Nebraskaplex Initiative was to research and investigate the feasibility of state involvement in an events facility in Omaha. That study came back, as you know, and recommended that there was a potential for revenue to come to the State of Nebraska if we could develop a complex of convention center and events arena in Omaha to entertain or bring into the state additional revenue and entertainment and convention opportunities. As you know, the City of Omaha voted for a sales tax to do a part of that project, which would be the renovation of the Civic Auditorium. That obviously ran, though there was support for that, ran into some opposition on the floor, and that caused some of us to get together and try to come up with an alternative. We have done that and that is proposed as part of the amendments to LB 961. And what they do, essentially is this, is earmark two cents of lapsed cigarette tax money to the City of Omaha for the renovation of the Omaha Civic Auditorium and/or additional renovation including potential for parking, and potential development of a convention center site in the downtown Omaha. The City of Omaha commits itself in this amendment to matching, for every two dollars that the state sends to the City of Omaha, the City of Omaha will commit or the City of Omaha and/or other nonfund sources commit to putting \$8 million into this project, either the continued enhancement of the Civic Auditorium or...and hopefully the development of the convention center site east of the...potentially east of the Civic Auditorium. In addition thereto, the bill calls for the creation of the Nebraskaplex Commission made up of two members from the county board, two county board members, two city councilpersons, and then a chairperson designated by the four individuals on the commission. The purpose of the Nebraskaplex Commission is to implement, look to implementing the Nebraskaplex study and to develop and hopefully construct a convention center facility as part of this Nebraskaplex complex in the downtown Omaha area. So to go back over this again, the cigarette tax lapsed amount of two cents will be earmarked for six years to the City of Omaha for enhancement of this complex of facilities that will be developed in downtown Omaha, and then with a matching commitment by the city to \$8 million of nonstate dollars to go into this project in one way, shape, or form, whether it be in the form of financing costs, parking, additional renovation, or even new construction of...part of new construction dollars for a convention center if that develops. I appreciate everybody's efforts in this. Obviously, as you can see, the amendment,